



Yellowstone Master Gardener Newsletter



Yellowstone Master Gardeners
P.O. Box 35021
Billings, MT 59107

Volume 3 Issue 1

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Send your submissions for the newsletter to ymastergardener@gmail.com by the 15th of March for submission in the next edition

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Renewal Time

Level 1 Training:

Deadline for registering for Level 1 is January 17th

Level 1 Application - Spring

February 3 - March 28

Two days to choose from:

Mondays from 6:30pm to 8:30pm at Billings Health & Rehab (2115 Central Ave)

or

Fridays from 2:00pm to 4:00pm at 1st Baptist Church (218 N 34th Street)

Topics Covered

Intro to MSU Extension and the M. G. Program
Soils & Fertility
Plant Growth & Development I
Growing Food From Your Garden
Flowers
Trees, Shrubs, Vines and Pruning
Lawns and Irrigation
Yard & Garden Maint./Composting
Intro to IPM-Integrated Pest Management

Level 2 Training:

Deadline for registering for level 2 is March 17th

Level 2 Application

March 31 - June 2

Two days to choose from:

Mondays from 6:30pm to 8:30pm

or

Fridays from 2:00pm to 4:00pm
At Yellowstone County Courthouse

Topics Covered

The Role of Master Gardener in Extension
Binomial Nomenclature
Fertility, Plant Nutrients
Plant Growth and Development 2
Entomology, Plant Diseases and Abiotic Disorders
Vegetable and Fruit IPM
Trees, Shrubs, and Lawn IPM
Advanced Pruning and Woody Ornamental Care
Propagation
Water Conservation

This year's level 1 and level 2 classes will cost \$125 each which is \$25 less than last year. However, no refunds will be given. (Last year the same classes cost \$150 and participants were given a \$20 or \$30 refund for successfully completing the class and putting in their volunteer hours. The prior system resulted in too much bookkeeping & red tape.)

If you have already taken and passed Level 1 & Level 2 and want to continue on with the Master Gardener Program, all you need to do is fill out the short [Renewal Application](#) and send in your \$20 (if you have completed the required volunteer hours for 2013) or \$70 (if you did not complete the required volunteer hours for 2013).

Don't forget, if you've been with the Yellowstone County Master Gardener Program for 5 or more years and are in good standing with your minimum required volunteer hours....**your renewal fee is waived....in other words FREE!!!** 😊 However you still need to fill out the [Renewal Application](#)

Forms for registering for the classes or for returning Master Gardeners to renew can be found by clicking on the **hotlinks** in this article or by going on-line to the Yellowstone County Extension Service.

SHIRLEY MAE SPILDIE – A TREASURE LOST



On Tuesday, December 10, 2013, we lost our beautiful lady of flowers, Shirley Mae Spildie. Her passing was unexpected and sudden. She died at home as she would have wished.

Shirley was born in Billings, Montana, the first of five children. When Shirley was nine her parents divorced and her home life was split between Billings and Livingston. She met her husband Gene while working toward her teaching degree at Eastern Montana College. Together they raised their three children: Duane Spildie, Roxanne Warne, and Lorene Tolbert.

Shirley was a natural teacher. She used her teaching degree in the Livingston and Billings areas and later provided a neighborhood kindergarten when it wasn't offered in Billings Schools. For many years she taught in the English Language Learners Program that was offered through First Baptist Church. Shirley taught throughout her life with great finesse, patience and timing.

Gardening was another interest of Shirley's. She learned her love for gardening from her mother and grandmother. She remembered working in their gardens and a Victory Garden in her family's yard during WWII. In 1972 she joined the Billings Thumb R Green Garden Club and has been a Yellowstone County Master Gardener since 1996. Her passion for gardening and flower arranging blossomed into an informal career. She served on many committees and boards and received numerous awards and honors at the local, State and National levels. She was brilliant in her floral arrangements and became a Master Judge of Artistic Design. The role she enjoyed the most was that of Design Instructor through the National Garden Club. She dedicated herself to teaching, promoting and sharing the beauty and joy of flowers with people of all ages, from school children to those who aspired to judge design. She taught classes from La Jolla to Anchorage and everywhere in between in the West and a number of points East. Shirley had a profound influence on many, many gardeners and designers throughout the United States.

Shirley's faith was strong and central to everything in her life. As a member of the First Baptist Church for over sixty years she served in countless capacities. For the past thirty-two years Shirley also enjoyed creating the floral arrangements seen each Sunday by the members of her Church. The Friendship Circle Christmas Party, held this past Tuesday, was the last activity Shirley shared with her friends. She looked forward to it each year. It was truly one of her favorite gatherings.

Should friends desire, memorials may be made to the First Baptist Church, Billings Thumb R Green Garden Club, or to the Spildie/Warne Scholarship Endowment c/o MSU-Billings Foundation.

To read more of Shirley Spildie please see:

Billings Gazette: Shirley Mae Spildie obituary dated December 15, 2013
<http://billingsgazette.com/lifestyles/announcements/obituaries/shirley-mae-spildie/article100e606c-74a3-5aa6-92c1-f77a58b7735d.html#ixzz2o432AkNr>

Billings Gazette: 'Flower-ful Ministry' January 23, 2012 • By Donna Healy of The Gazette Staff; Photo by James Woodcock/Gazette Staff
http://billingsgazette.com/news/local/flower-ful-ministry/article_dfa14603-6d06-529c-b839-d259e2dd0d36.html

The Yellowstone Master Gardener Newsletter: Vol. 1 Issue 6 – June, 2012. http://www.co.yellowstone.mt.gov/extension/horticulture/mgardeners/Newsletters/YCMasterGardenerNews_June12.pdf
<http://www.co.yellowstone.mt.gov/extension/horticulture/HolidayFlowers/index.asp>





In Memory of Shirley

Shirley was nationally known for her skills, talents and instruction in flower design. The spectacular fresh flower designs pictured above were created for Shirley's memorial service using her containers and metal sculptures. The arrangements by Thumb-R-Green Garden Club members are a result of Shirley's floral design influence and encouragement: (left to right, top to bottom) (1) Rosemary Power, (2) Gerry Mottram, (3) Mary McLane, (4) Mary McLane, (5) Betty Furgason, (6) Diana Halvorson.

Teresa Bessette - Interview by Bob Wicks



Teresa Bessette has been a Master Gardener since 2011, achieving Level 3 in 2013. Teresa grew up in Billings and lived on Yellowstone Avenue, just down the street from Moss Mansion. When she was a little girl her family had a big garden that both her mom and dad took care of with the help of

Teresa and her five brothers. Teresa was also influenced by her grandmother who had a vegetable garden and a great aunt who had a flower garden. When helping her family with their gardens, Teresa learned that she loves to pull weeds. I think this is some kind of sickness because I've never met anyone who likes to pull weeds. She even admitted that she can't walk by a planter without stopping to pull a weed that may have grown there. If that's not enough she also likes to rake leaves and shovel snow!

Teresa went to Eastern Montana College (now MSU-B) where she graduated with a teaching degree. She then moved to Miles City where she met her husband Russ. At their home in Miles City, the whole backyard was a vegetable garden and half the front yard was a flower garden. In 1985 they moved to Austin, Texas where they both taught school. Teresa gardened there, but had a hard time because the top soil is only 6 inches deep and then you hit limestone. During their time in Texas they would teach during the winter and come to Billings for the summer. In 2011 they both retired and moved to Billings permanently. Teresa also has a son, Nick, who is getting ready to enter law school.

Teresa had been in town for a little over a week when she saw an ad for the Master Gardener Program. She signed up immediately and has never regretted it. Teresa talks about how she enjoys all the people who are involved in the group and how much she has learned from all of you. Teresa does some of her volunteer time at

Zoo Montana where she serves on the board. She also volunteers at the Moss Mansion as a tour guide. She helps at the Metra Demonstration Garden, Farmers Market and is currently serving on the board of the Yellowstone County Master Gardeners Association.

Gardening is her main hobby but when not doing that, she enjoys reading. Teresa also enjoys running and has participated in various marathons. She began running when she found out she had cancer and realized it was a healthy thing to do and helped her cope with her health concerns. Now, she uses her story to give hope to people who currently facing the same issues. The tip of the month from Teresa is to use as few pesticides as possible. She also wants you to help campaign against genetically modified organisms (GMO). Teresa is a hard working and fun person to be around. Because of her dedication and enthusiasm with Master Gardeners, she continues to make a huge impact on our program. It is people like Teresa that make the local Master Gardeners a huge success and a gardening leader in the state of Montana.



Before the Storm



Co-dominant stems or branches are a common occurrence with trees. This is a condition that can be a potential hazard. Weak branch crotches develop when two branches are about the same size. If one is not pruned and both are allowed to become large, the weakness increases. These branches may also have included bark which makes the problem worse. Shown below are some good examples of bolting crotches together before the storm. These pictures were taken at the Catholic Church in Hysham, MT. If you pass through Hysham stop and look this work over. Whoever did the work did a very good job. The National Arborist Association has a lot more information on this subject. —Corry Mordeaux

Amy Grandpre's scheduled days to be in the office ... of course always subject to change.

January – one day a week, usually Wednesdays

February – two days a week, usually Mondays and Fridays

March – three days a week, usually Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays



PLANT TO PLATE

April 8 - 9 2014 at Chico Hot Springs presented by *The Zone 4* team

Featured speakers: Cheryl Moore-Gough, Suzie Middleton & Roger Joy Register by Feb 15th and Save

<http://www.zone4magazine.com/events/2014>

Winter Gardening Tips *by Sheri Kisch*

In Jan and Feb when it's slow, you can still clean all wooden handles and then rub them down with BOILED LINSEED OIL. They will look better than new. For a more complete list of Winter gardening tips –go to Grapevine on Yellowstone County Master Gardener's web site

www.co.yellowstone.mt.gov/extension/horticulture/grapevine.asp

Yellowstone County Master Gardener Association is now on Facebook. "Like us" and find out what is going on and contribute to our community <https://www.facebook.com/YCMGA>

Perusing Seed Catalogs

by Murry Lyda

Good seed- It is the season for perusing seed catalogs. I'll have a little more of those and a few of that. A little forethought will make sure your favorite veggies continue for the years of gardening.

Keeping good seed begins with knowing how much room the plants need as to not cross. Some require much room. As we know heirloom may breed true.

Hybrids are not reliable. The seed dealers most often label whether or not it's a hybrid and also mention planting conditions, but not pollination space. Place your "easy" self-pollination heirlooms like peas, beans, and tomatoes a short distance apart. For limited space, remember and keep it simple: one lettuce, one squash, one pumpkin and one cucumber for saving the character of the heirloom. Some lettuce bloom at different times. With this, at the end of next season, the dried seeds will lay on your shed bench waiting for the next round.

Blue Creek School Garden

- by Ann Guthals



In the spring of 2013, Master Gardeners Murry Lyda and Ann Guthals met with Tish Montgomery and Trisha Swanson, parents of Blue Creek School students, to begin planning the planting of the Blue Creek School garden. Many people had come together to create the space for the garden with raised beds, walkways, hoses, and a protective chain link fence to keep the deer (and bear) out.

Murry and Ann gave Tish and Trisha ideas for soil amendment, plants to consider, timing of planting, and care of the garden. In subsequent meetings the MGs worked further on plans and donated

plants and seeds to help the project. A key teacher, Mr. Strachan, took on the bulk of the remaining planning and preparation for planting. Other teachers helped throughout the season. Students raised tomato and pepper starts for the garden. An important problem to solve with school gardens was summer maintenance. Trisha organized a schedule of parent/student volunteers to care for the garden each week of the summer season.

In the fall, the students used the garden for classes and harvested carrots, onions, squash, greens, and other food from their garden. Plans are already in the works for an early meeting to discuss last year's successes and areas needing improvement and to firm up plans for the 2014 season. Some items to be discussed are getting even more teachers and students involved, planting earlier (the garden wasn't ready early in 2013 so we missed being able to plant cool weather crops), and deciding what to do with the 2014 harvest.

As the years pass, hopefully we will see many more schools in Billings developing school gardens with the able help of the Master Gardeners of Yellowstone County!



Sloppy Joes

1 lb. ground meat
 Chopped onion, other chopped veggies like zucchini, bell peppers, carrots, etc. (quantity as desired to make the dish more meaty or more full of veggies)
 Olive oil
 Catsup
 Mustard
 Pickle relish
 Tomato soup concentrate

Sauté the chopped veggies in a little olive oil until onions are translucent. Add the ground meat and brown the meat until done. Add some catsup, mustard and pickle relish (add the condiments to taste, several tablespoons of catsup, a tablespoon of relish and a teaspoon of mustard). Salt & pepper to taste. Add a can of tomato soup concentrate. Stir all together and cook for a while to let flavors blend.

Serve over rice or pasta or a slice of whole grain bread.

When I first got married, this is the only recipe I knew!
 Submitted by Ann Guthals

Send your favorite seasonal recipes using garden produce for submission to the newsletter at ymastergarden@gmail.com by March 15th.

LEMON LIMAS

1/2 CUP WATER
 1 TABLESPOON BUTTER MELTED
 1 TEASPOON SUGAR
 1/4 TEASPOON SALT
 1 (10 OZ) PKG FROZEN LIMA BEANS
 1 TABLESPOON LEMON JUICE
 1/2 TO 3/4 TEASPOON GROUND MUSTARD

IN A SAUCEPAN, BRING WATER TO A BOIL. ADD LIMA BEANS & RETURN TO A BOIL. REDUCE HEAT, COVER AND SIMMER FOR 8-10 MINUTES OR UNTIL TENDER. DRAIN. COMBINE THE BUTTER, LEMON JUICE, SUGAR, MUSTARD AND SALT. POUR OVER BEANS AND TOSS TO COAT. YIELD 4 SERVINGS.

from *Light and Tasty*

Submitted by Sheri Kisch

ONE SERVING (1/3) CUP (HA!)
 EQUALS 107 CALORIES, 3 G FAT, 8 MG CHOLESTEROL, 197 MG SODIUM, 15 G CARBOHYDRATE, 3 G FIBER, 5 G PROTEIN. DIABETIC EXCHANGE: 1 STARCH.

In seed-time learn,
 in harvest teach, in
 winter enjoy.
 ~William Blake

The mild mannered lima bean first "discovered" in Peru, has been pleasing palates for more than 500 years. This pale green or whitish bean is full of protein. It's also rich in calcium, iron, and vitamins, making it one of the most nutritional members of the legume family. The bean comes in two varieties: baby lima and Fordhook. Baby lima have a delicate, almost sweet taste. Fordhooks are a bit more flavorful. In the American South, the larger lima is better known as the butter bean.

CARROT LENTIL CASSEROLE

1 large onion, chopped
 3/4 cup dry lentils, rinsed
 3/4 cup reduced fat cheddar cheese
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon rubbing sage
 1 (14 1/2 oz) can chicken broth

1 cup finely chopped carrots
 3/4 cup uncooked brown rice
 1/2 cup chopped green pepper
 1/2 teaspoon each thyme, basil, & oregano
 1/4 teaspoon garlic pepper
 1 (14 1/2 oz) can diced tomatoes, undrained

In a 1 1/2 qt. baking dish coated with butter, combine the onions, carrots, lentils, rice, cheese, green pepper and seasonings. Stir in broth and tomatoes. Cover and bake at 350 degrees for 1 1/2 hr., or until the liquid is absorbed and lentils and rice are tender. Yield: 6 servings

One serving (1 cup) equals 239 calories, 4 g fat, 8 mg. cholesterol, 557 mg sodium, 41 g carbohydrate, 8 g fiber, 14 g protein. Diabetic exchanges: 2 starch, 1 lean meat, 1 vegetable

—Submitted by Sheri Kisch from Light and Tasty



<http://www.co.yellowstone.mt.gov/extension/horticulture/mastergard.asp>

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[http://www.facebook.com/
msuextension](http://www.facebook.com/msuextension)



Poinsettia -by Elaine Allard

The poinsettia is the most popular of all Christmas flowers. Joel Roberts Poinsett introduced the poinsettia plant to the United States from Mexico. Poinsett was a botanist, physician and the first United States Ambassador to Mexico. In Mexico, the poinsettia is a perennial shrub that will grow 10-15 feet tall and was once considered a weed. There are more than 100 varieties of poinsettias available today. Poinsettias come in many colors: white, pink, burgundy, marbled and speckled but the red poinsettia is still the most popular.

The showy colored parts of Poinsettias that most people think of as the flowers are actually colored bracts (modified leaves). The colors of the bracts are created through "photoperiodism", meaning that they require darkness. The yellow flowers, or cyathia, are in the center of the colorful bracts. A fresh poinsettia is one which little or no yellow pollen is showing on the flower clusters in center of the bracts. Plants that have shed their pollen will soon drop their colorful bracts. To get a poinsettia to re-flower, keep it in darkness for 12 hours at a time for at least five days in a row or until color shows on the brackets.

Poinsettias (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*) are part of the Euphorbiaceae or Spurge family. Like many plants in the Euphorbiaceae family, poinsettias ooze a milky sap. Some people with latex allergies can have a skin reaction to the sap after touching the leaves. If pets eat the leaves, the sap may cause nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Poinsettias are not considered poisonous and the leaves are reportedly not very tasty, so it's unlikely that kids would be able to eat enough of them to get sick. Nevertheless, take caution because the leaves can still be a choking hazard for children and pets.

References:

<http://urbanext.illinois.edu/Poinsettia/facts.cfm>

Suggestions for Keeping your Poinsettia Looking Good

Keep in bright light, but not where there is direct sunlight on the plant.

Keep away from cold drafts and away from heated air vents to help prevent leaves from dropping.

Remove the protective wrap to allow water to completely drain.

Keep soil moist, but avoid overwatering.

Do not fertilize your poinsettia until after the blooming season is over.

Tips to Make Your Poinsettia Bloom Again Next Christmas

From October 1 to December 1, (or for at least 40 days) a poinsettia will need a strict light/dark regimen to produce color. Provide 13 to 16 hours of complete and uninterrupted darkness daily. At dusk, place the plant in a dark room (or closet) or cover with a box or paper bag. At dawn, move or uncover the plant to allow 8 hours of sunlight.